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CHAPTER XXII
EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

871 AS education in the widest sense must be described all efforts, organized or otherwise, which tend to impart to individuals habitual forms of acting and thinking. Understood in this sense, every social institution involves educational activities by means of which individuals are led to acquire the behaviour-patterns that make up the institution. Thus our description of economic life has involved the description of certain educational techniques—the training in productive methods, the imparting of economic knowledge, or of concepts of property and wealth. But most societies also operate with more formalized methods of education, specific educational institutions which make it their business to train the rising generation in forms of acting and thinking regarded as essential by the society. We shall deal in this chapter with these formalized educational institutions, of which there are two in Nupe: the institution of the Koran school, concerned with Mohammedan religious teaching, and the institution of age-grade associations. The shortest definition of an educational institution is by the 'type' which it is meant to produce. In this sense we can say that Mohammedan religious education produces the Mallam, the Mohammedan scholar, and the age-grade associations the *zoon politikon* as understood in Nupe. We shall see that in certain respects both types of education can be identified with motives and aims underlying the political system, and thus with institutions devoted to what I have called in the heading of this chapter 'Education for Citizenship'.

MALLAM SCHOOLS

814 There are many degrees and varieties of Mohammedan learning. The
875 title 'Mallam'—*mân* in Nupe—which one encounters so often among the
554 Nupe, is by no means a safe guide. For the man who has gone through a few years' study of the Koran, having learned by heart a few *sura*; the sand-diviner or charm-seller who writes out verses from the Koran and sells them as amulets; the man who has acquired real learning and scholarship, and who can read and write in Arabic and possibly in Hausa—they all are called Mallam. Though the title is used indiscriminately, no Nupe ignores the essential difference between scholarship and the thin veneer of semi-learning. The Nupe distinguish two grades of learning: the lower grade is the study of the Koran (*kurami*), which consists mostly in the memorizing of prayers and whole pages and chapters from the Koran; the higher grade is called *kpikpe*, knowledge, or *litafi* (Hausa), book, and consists in the study of Arabic and the careful reading of the Koran and the better-known commentaries. The most advanced scholars would study, in addition to these books, also the historical records of the Nigerian Emirates which have been compiled (in Hausa, written in Arabic script) by scholars of former days. Only a student of 'knowledge' can claim to be a 'real' Mallam. While there are

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achieved in one context of social life to other social contexts.[1] Our data allow us to make the following observation on this point: co-operation and solidarity fashioned in the age-grades appear capable of being transferred to other social contexts because of two conditions which they satisfy. Co-operation and solidarity are not left to grow at random and, as it were, unconsciously; rather they are of a specific, *ad hoc*, type; they clearly formulate their purpose and operate in the sphere of distinct awareness. Moreover, age-grade co-operation is actuated in circumstances of psychologically impressive nature, i.e. in the context of religious experiences. But age-grade integration also admits its own limitation in that it avoids attempting to bridge over the deepest existing social gulfs, of local community and social class.

The second aspect of the preparation embodied in the age-grade system is the training of the adolescent, through discipline and certain concrete activities, in the tasks and duties which await him in adult life, and in the values and incentives which he will have to make his own. In the village this preparation represents a first step towards a final social career; in Bida it mostly implants in the mind of the adolescent values and incentives, as it were, *in abstracto*, without promising equally their fulfilment in later life. It teaches people who will never share in directing the fate of their country to appreciate, and make their own, the motives and values which govern the conduct of those who do. It imparts, if not claims to responsible citizenship, yet its spirit.

THE MEANING OF NUPE LIFE

If we compare Nupe religious teaching with the teaching implied in the age-grade system we find that the two educational institutions supplement each other in many respects and that, between them, they take in the whole field of 'education for citizenship'. The Mallam school offers promotion to one social plane; the age-grade association practises promotion in the framework of a complex scale of steps and grades. The promotion afforded by religious education is 'real', in the sense that it involves social privileges in adult life; that practised in the age-grades is fictitious, even vicarious, and concerns mental readiness rather than concrete achievements. Religious education, finally, creates a loosely organized professional group and at the same time fosters a much wider psychological unity, which embraces the whole of Nupe society, across tribal and class boundaries. The age-grades create an intensive solidarity, but only in a very narrow framework, and give tribal and class boundaries a wide berth. Common to both religious education and the age-grades is the social upward trend, the motive of rise and promotion. This upward trend appears indeed as the paramount motive in Nupe cultural life. If it is possible to reduce a whole culture to a single formula, to a fundamental unitary *ethos*, we find it in this *leitmotif* of

[1] Cf. F. C. Bartlett, in *The Study of Society*, 1939, p. 43: 'A specially interesting question is: if cooperation is established in one respect, when and how far does this help individual members of the groups concerned to cooperate in other respects?'

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Nupe education. No aspect of culture affords closer access to the paramount cultural motives and values. For education not only teaches openly the specific aims and conceptions of life accepted by the society, but reveals them also indirectly, in the motives and conceptions which it utilizes to call forth the desired response.

Is, then, the reverse equally true? is behaviour that does not conform to this conception of life met with public disapproval? One might indeed ask if Nupe culture did not reserve some legitimate place within its framework for individuals to whom its dominant trend was uncongenial, and who represent what some anthropologists have called 'deviants' from the type of personality which the society regards as so highly desirable.[1] I must admit that I have found no conspicuous instances of such 'deviant' types. But we can guess the public response towards such social or cultural 'failures' from certain occasional incidents: for an attitude that belies the upward trend, and this dynamic aspect of self-advancement, is indeed regarded as a 'failure'; such individuals would be dismissed by the people with a mental shrug—'*u de kokari à*', 'he makes no effort'. As the Nupe state undertakes to govern the moral life of the people and to co-ordinate rigidly their conceptions of right and wrong, so its education attempts a complete unification of types of personality.

Yet successful suppression in normal life may only mean that the 'deviant' type is forced into abnormality and will reveal itself in psycho-pathological cases. I have admitted in the first chapter the scantiness of data concerning mental disorders among the Nupe. But so far as they exist they seem to bear out the view that mental disorders in Nupe are largely symptoms of the failure of individuals to adjust themselves to the demands of the social environment. I have mentioned that the large majority of psycho-pathological cases that came to my notice presented the clinical picture of paranoid schizophrenia, with marked delusions and persecution-mania. Now modern psychiatry has shown that schizophrenia is essentially the result of inadequacy to a social environment. Indeed, in the few cases which I could examine more closely features of the social environment conspicuously entered the clinical picture. One man was under the delusion that he had been persecuted by a person of very high rank and robbed, through his intrigues, of his home and family; another maintained that intrigues against him at the court had cost him his land; a third case was that of an old man who was under the delusion that his younger brother (whom he admitted to be the more clever and successful of the two) was out to kill him. In creating these very specific delusions the psycho-pathological individual escapes from the consciousness of his own inadequacy. Though distorted and purely negative, the fears and anxieties which make up the delusion are the same fears and anxieties that accompany the successful mental adjustment to the *ethos* of Nupe life—the anxiety to 'get on' in the world, not to be left behind in the race for rank and position or the fear to lose the support of the 'powers that be', on whose influence one's career and safety depend. The border-line between normality and abnormality is that between

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, and Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament*.

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The present study can only claim to be a first attempt in field experiments of this kind, carried out under conditions which did not allow a more extensive investigation. Yet the question could be raised how far the evidence obtained in experiments which were carried out on so small a scale and in so special a setting can be considered significant and representative of the culture at large. In order to secure a representative group I selected for my experimental subjects students who came from a great many different places in Nupe and Yoruba respectively. The two experimental groups were matched as closely as possible with regard to age, school standard and the surroundings from which they came. In Nupe I was able to work with larger groups: with 60 boys of the age of 12–18 who were taken from every school form, i.e. who had been students of the Middle School for periods varying from 1 to 5 years. Now, as I shall show later, the experiments admit to a certain extent of statistical interpretation, i.e. the responses to certain essential features in the story or the pictures can be classified and treated quantitatively. This statistical evidence allows us to gauge the extent to which the 20 Yoruba subjects can be considered a significant and representative sample. I found that the means for the various responses calculated for the small group correspond very closely to the means arrived at for the large group; in other words, there exist no unequally distributed marked individual differences which would invalidate the results obtained among the small group. Since school standard and age do not correspond very closely in Nigerian schools, the statistical evidence can moreover be used to check independently the influence of age and educational standard. As regards the age factor, we find a slight rise in the appreciation of factors of reasoning and emotional facts corresponding to age; a fairly unchanged appreciation of situational facts; and a fall in the appreciation of moral ideas from the age of 13–15. More important for this investigation is the educational factor; here the statistical evidence proves conclusively that the difference in educational standard has no influence on the psychological responses and attitudes examined in these experiments.

III. THE CULTURE DIFFERENCES

Before going into details I must say a few words about the two cultures and the nature of their diversity. The two groups speak different languages which, however, belong to the same linguistic group (of so-called *Sudanic* languages). Their economic system and their general social organization are similar. Yet other aspects of their culture, aspects which may be held to express more specifically psychological trends or tendencies,[1] reveal a fundamental difference. The religion of the Yoruba is characterized by an elaborate and rationalized hierarchical system of deities, each of which has its specific, specialized duty and function. The Nupe have no such system; their religious beliefs centre round a concept of magic of the 'mana' type, i.e. vague, abstract, impersonal power. In the rich, highly developed realistic art of the Yoruba the main *motif* of pictures, plastics and wooden images is the human figure; religious and mythical emblems of this kind play an important part in their life. Again,

[1] See my article on "The Typological Approach to Culture"(4).